

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 153376

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ORIGIN SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 JUSE-00 L-03 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-15 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 PM-03 ISO-00 /032 R

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R 280455Z JUN 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

USARMY CID COMMAND

UNCLAS STATE 153376

SECDEF FOR PDASD(C) -- CID COMMAND FOR CIOP-FR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CGEN: (U.S. V. SIMMONS)

SUBJECT: PRESS COVERAGE OF SIMMONS' ARREST

REF: STATE 151000

MMARY: A BRIEF SURVEY OF FRIDAY'S PAPERS REVEALS THAT SIMMONS' ARREST RECEIVED SCANT PUBLICITY, WITH THE NEW YORK TIMES IGNORING IT ENTIRELY, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL GIVING IT TWO SENTENCES ON PAGE ONE, THE WASHINGTON POST THREE PARAGRAPHS ON PAGE A-9, AND THE WASHINGTON STAR THREE PARAGRAPHS ON PAGE A-5. ONLY THE POST MENTIONED THE CURRENT PROCEEDINGS IN HONG KONG COURTS.

1. LATE CITY EDITION OF THE NEW YORK TIMES FOR FRIDAY, 6/27/75 CONTAINED NO MENTION OF SIMMONS' ARREST.

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PAGE 02 STATE 153376

2. WALL STREET JOURNAL, EASTERN EDITION, 6/27/75 CARRIED THE FOLLOWING ITEM ON PAGE ONE, COL. 3, AS THE SEVENTH OF 18 ITEMS IN ITS WORLD NEWS ROUNDUP:

A FORMER U.S. DEFENSE OFFICIAL IN VIETNAM WHOSE JOB WAS TO BUY OIL PRODUCTS FOR THE THIEU REGIME WITH U.S. AID FUNDS WAS ARRESTED AND CHARGED WITH BILKING THE GOVERNMENT OF \$1.2 MILLION. HE IS DAVID C. SIMMONS, 32.

3. EARLY EDITION OF WASHINGTON POST FOR 6/27/75 FEATURED A FOUR COLUMN HEADLINE ("EX-MAJOR HELD IN FRAUD SCHEME") IN ITS "AROUND THE NATION" NEWS WRAP-UP ON PAGE A-9. THE THREE PARAGRAPH STORY CONTAINED THE GIST OF YESTERDAY'S NEWS RELEASE PLUS THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

"THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAD OBTAINED AN EARLIER COURT ORDER IN HONG KONG FREEZING ABOUT \$2 MILLION IN BANK ACCOUNTS, APPARENTLY MOST OF IT IN SIMMONS' NAME. SIMMONS SAID HE WAS WORTH "MORE THAN THAT" BECAUSE OF HIS WIFE'S BUSINESS INTERESTS, INCLUDING RUBBER AND COFFEE PLANTATIONS, BEAUTY, BARBER AND JEWELRY SHOPS AND A CONTROLLING INTEREST IN A BANK".

4. EARLY EDITION OF WASHINGTON STAR FOR 6/27/75 ON PAGE A-5, COL. 1, IN A REGULAR SECTION OF BRIEF STORIES ENTITLED "THE NATION" CARRIED A STORY OF SIMILAR CONTENT AND LENGTH, BUT WITHOUT THE REFERENCE TO THE COURT ACTION IN HONG KONG.

5. WASHINGTON TV CHANNEL 5 TEN O'CLOCK NEWS CARRIED THE STORY ON 6/26/75 IN A SHORT FACTUAL PARAGRAPH ABOUT THE ARREST AND CHARGES. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 AUG 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE153376
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: SCA;SCS;RJBOYLAN;ESN
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D750225-0306
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t197506103/baaaaanxt.tel
Line Count: 85
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SCSE
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 JAN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: WITHDRAWN <01 JUL 2003 by PhilliR0, PRIVACY>; RELEASED <20 JAN 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <21 JAN 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: CGEN, CASC, (SIMMONS, V)
To: HONG KONG INFO SECDEF
USARMY CID COMMAND
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006